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## Q.&A.: David R. Gergen

# Key Presidential Buffer Looks Back

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9 — After three years as President Reagan's director of communications, David R. Gergen is leaving to do some teaching, thinking and writing about his sometimes turbulent experiences at the White House.

Recently, he took time to talk with Steven R. Weisman and Francis X. Clines of The New York Times.



The New York Times

David R. Gergen

**Q.** Has the Administration been too willing to use lie detector tests, wire-tapping and F.B.I. investigations to stop leaks?

**A.** The concern about disclosure of classified information is legitimate. The leaks seem to get worse decade by decade. At the same time, it's very important to maintain the commitment to open government. There are competing interests, and those who deal only with security issues sometimes want to go to almost any length to stop the disclosures. Those concerned about accountability don't always appreciate the security needs. You have to strike a reasonable balance. I've been on the losing end of some of those battles.

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*EXCERPTED*